

In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Volume 3 Issue 5, March 5, 2004

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Message from the Mayor

The DC Department of Health recently sent a letter to the 23,000 homes in the District of Columbia that have lead service lines connecting to water mains. I want to underscore to all of our residents that this is an issue that I am deeply committed to resolving. Our city government is working hard to alleviate lead levels and the concerns of citizens.

The letter—sent by Dr. Daniel R. Lucey, the Department of Health's Interim Chief Medical Officer—advises that pregnant women and children under 6 years of age avoid drinking unfiltered water from their tap if their home is one of the 23,000 homes identified as having a lead service line. Again, this advisory is only for pregnant women and children under 6 who live in homes with lead service lines. It is not a "citywide" advisory or a system-wide caution.

We will continue to communicate with residents as we obtain more information from ongoing tests of water and blood lead levels. I pledge that we will keep residents informed of any updated recommendations based on ongoing water tests. Our primary concern is your health.

Below is some useful information I would like all of our concerned residents to take advantage of:

- Call the Lead Services Hotline at (202) 787-2732 or send email to WASA at WQP2003@dcwasa.com if you have questions about whether a lead service line serves your home. The [WASA website](#) has updated information.
- You may also view WASA's District of Columbia [lead service maps](#) online.
- Attend community meetings with WASA and the DC Department of Health. [More information.](#)
- If you would like to test your home, WASA will provide a free testing kit within two days, free pick-up and test results within 30 days. Call (202) 787-2732. You may also drop off water samples at one of the following six sites:
 - 301 Bryant Street, NW (open 24 hours/7 days)
 - 810 First Street, NE (open Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm)
 - Ft. Reno Pumping Station; 3900 Donaldson Place, NW (open Monday – Friday, 7:30 am–4 pm; Saturdays, noon – 3 pm)
 - Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant; 5000 Overlook Avenue, SW (open 24 hours/7 days)
 - 125 O Street, SE (open 24 hours/7 days)
 - Dalecarlia Treatment Plant, 5900 MacArthur Boulevard, NW (open Monday – Friday, 7 am – 7 pm)
- Read the DC Department of Health's [fact sheet on lead](#).
- Read the Environmental Protection Agency's [Lead in Drinking Water Notice for District of Columbia Residents](#).
- Visit the [EPA's website](#) for tips on how to reduce lead in your drinking water.
- Find out what else you can do to protect your family from [lead hazards](#).
- Get the facts on lead from the [Centers for Disease Control](#).
- Continue to check the DC government's home page at www.dc.gov for updates.

I encourage all of our residents to view Dr. Lucey's letter on the Department of Health's website at: http://dchealth.dc.gov/information/fact_sheets/lead.shtm.



AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

Department of Homeland Security Communications System Rollout

The US Department of Homeland Security, as part of its Homeland Security Information Network initiative, last week announced the expansion of its computer-based counterterrorism communications system to all 50 states, five territories, Washington, DC, and 50 major urban areas to strengthen its two-way flow of threat information.

This communications capability will deliver to states and major urban areas real-time interactive connectivity with the DHS Homeland Security Operations Center through the Joint Regional Information Exchange System (JRIES). This secure system will significantly strengthen the two-way flow of real-time threat information and benefit residents across the city and the nation.



At the February 24 event, I thanked DHS Secretary Tom Ridge for choosing the Metropolitan Police Department headquarters for this important announcement.

We've come a long way in this region since September 11, 2001. I could write pages and pages about how much we've learned—about how much progress we've made in making our city and our region safer for our citizens. At the same time, we're striving to keep our city open and welcoming. It's a difficult balance, but we're working tirelessly to ensure it.

Here in the District, we have invested heavily in building out our 800 megahertz radio system for our key responders. In addition to radio infrastructure, there are a number of other communication tools that we continuously evaluate and upgrade as technology improves. But we're working together like we've never worked together before.

As Secretary Ridge has said, "Better information that is shared and understood faster between the federal government and state and local partners is the way to achieve security."

Community Profile April York

April York, a senior at Woodrow Wilson Senior High School, describes herself as a young civil rights advocate dedicated to making every youth voice heard. She is the current Youth Mayor of Washington, DC and frequently attends community events with Mayor Anthony A. Williams to speak about issues that youth in the District of Columbia face today. April was the Ward 5 representative on the DC Youth Advisory Council from 2002 to 2003 and is serving as a leader on the DC Youth Advisory Council.

April has a deep interest in law that began in elementary school when she was selected to be a Junior FBI Agent. Since then, she has been active in moot court competitions, received a certificate of appreciation from the United States District Court for the District of Columbia and participated in the Law Explorer's Program at Piper Rudnick Law Firm.



April York

In June 2000 April entered a four-year leadership program, the Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute, which is where she began her campaign to run for Youth Mayor.

"The Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute has inspired me to achieve great heights. The institute reinforces that you shouldn't ever limit yourself, because you can do anything," April said. "The institute builds great leaders."



LINK TO OTHER
WEBSITES

[DC Agenda](#)

[Hands on DC](#)

[DC Convention
and Tourism](#)

[DC Public Library](#)

Neighborhood Citizen Summits Prove Successful

From February 10 through February 26, we held Neighborhood Citizen Summits in all eight wards of the District of Columbia. First, I'd like to thank each resident who came to these important forums. Each summit was truly an exercise in a new form of democracy and civic engagement that we're creating in our city.

On November 15, we gathered at the new Washington Convention Center for the citywide Citizen Summit III. The follow-up meetings last month were a chance for me to engage in a conversation with residents. In my conversations with residents and leaders from every ward of this city, certain issues come up repeatedly and these issues are what I'm focusing on in my administration: education, public safety and expanding opportunity for residents in health care, housing, and jobs.

My staff and I are making every effort to incorporate residents' ideas into my administration's initiatives—and these ideas are reflected in the budget I am sending to the DC Council. More than 3,000 people attended Citizen Summit III, and more than 2,000 attended our series of Neighborhood Citizen Summits.

As I told District residents at the eight neighborhood meetings, the summit process is the most direct way for the public to add its voice to policy and budget priorities. I like to call it "grass roots" democracy at its finest. Residents came to hear about new ideas that came out of Citizen Summit III, as well as my vision for the future of our city.

I was thrilled not only with the turnout at the summits, but with the quality of the questions and discussions that took place. Attendance grew as we progressed throughout the wards and across our city. Clearly, our citizens take tremendous pride in the District, and as Mayor that makes me proud.

Over the next several weeks, we will prepare a summary of comments and questions from residents. It will be posted on our Neighborhood Action website at: neighborhoodaction.dc.gov.



Education Plan—School Governance

In my State of the District address last month, I promised that I would deliver legislation to the DC Council regarding the governance of DC Public Schools.

Two weeks ago, I sent a bill to the Council that would establish a clear line of accountability over the superintendent. The Council and the Mayor will have the ability to hire and fire the Superintendent. The Council and the Mayor will exercise budget oversight over the operation of DCPS. Nevertheless, I want the Superintendent to run the schools. I want to help a Superintendent cut through the bureaucracy in the current system and create a clear reporting structure.

My bill will:

- Elevate the Superintendent to Chancellor to make changes in the system, without harsh criticism or worry about layers of buy-in.
- Make it easier for us to track the money we are putting into the system to ensure that it gets to the intended places.
- Allow for a Chancellor to make decisions over personnel, purchases and other basic operations without endless bureaucratic process.
- Make it easier to hold on to what is working well and to support the schools by leveraging construction, IT systems, and other successful projects across agencies.

That is my plan. I expect and welcome a healthy discussion with the Council and others on it.



Greater Washington Board of Trade Transit-Oriented Development Event

On February 23, I took part in a unique panel discussion with the Greater Washington Board of Trade about the current and projected influx of residents into the region. The focus of this panel was to examine how our region can encourage transit-oriented development around our Metro and commuter rail stations.

Over the next 25 years our region is projected to have 1.5 million new residents. In order for the District to capitalize on this influx while also decreasing our already heavy traffic congestion problem we have to explore the option of increasing the number of residences and businesses surrounding our Metro stations.

Of Metro's 83 stations, more than 40 lie in the District, which gives us the opportunity not only to improve economic development but also to utilize more than 2,000 acres of vacant, abandoned or underutilized lands. Nearly two-thirds of the District's housing units are within a 10-minute walk of a Metro station and nearly all are accessible by bus.

In Columbia Heights, we are in the process of building nearly 2,000 new units of housing and more than half a million square feet of new retail shopping on formerly vacant land. Near the U street station, we are in the process of building more than 750 new housing units. Farther down the Green Line, at the Navy Yard station, our waterfront initiative will reclaim nearly 3,000 housing units and well over 20,000 new jobs. In all, the Green Line corridor alone is poised to add more than 10,000 units of housing and more than 1 million square feet of retail space and nearly 9 million square feet of new office space over the next decade.

While these numbers seem good, there is always room to do better. We are pushing for the same success to extend throughout the District, from Anacostia to Foggy Bottom. Last week, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Board approved District funding for the first three miles of what we hope will grow to be a 33-mile system of next-generation transit service that will begin with a demonstration project east of the river in Anacostia.

Updated List Released with the District's Unclaimed Property

The District of Columbia Office of Finance and Treasury (OFT) recently released its updated list of unclaimed property collected during the past six months, which totals more than \$11.1 million in cash and a total value of more than \$6 million in stock. An advertisement appeared in *The Washington Times* on February 19 and in *The Washington Post* on February 26 to increase the public's awareness about the assets.

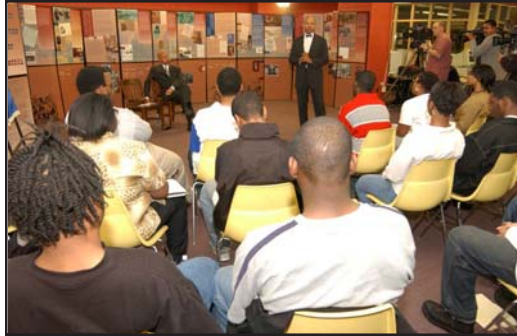
Unclaimed property consists of money and other personal assets that are considered lost or abandoned when an owner cannot be located after a specified time frame, usually three years. Abandoned property includes unpaid wages, certificates of deposit, jewelry, paid life insurance policies, utility deposits, gift certificates, Christmas club accounts, and stocks. OFT's Unclaimed Property Unit receives unclaimed property from banks, insurance companies, utility companies, hospitals, universities, and other entities.

To learn how to reclaim property or to search the property database, please visit the agency's website, www.cfo.dc.gov, or call (202) 442-8181. To invite an Unclaimed Property representative to your community event, you may also email Elliott Kindred, director of the Unclaimed Property Unit, at Elliott.Kindred@dc.gov.

In the last year, OFT has returned more than \$7.5 million in unclaimed property to its rightful owners.



District Activities



Mayor Williams and students at Woodson High School participate in a Dialogue on Brown vs Board of Education.



Mayor Williams and Secretary Tom Ridge take part in "Target Washington," a public television town meeting on homeland security issues facing the Washington area.



Mayor Williams launches new traffic light and pedestrian signals.

Community News

- [BRITA Donates 10,000 Water Filters](#)
- [Washington DC Named Bicycle Friendly City](#)
- [DC, WASA Release Lead Fact Sheet](#)

[View all News Releases](#)

Upcoming Events

3/14 St. Patrick's Day Parade

Beginning at 7th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
For more information, call the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee at (301) 498-9793

4/03 National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade

10 am
Beginning at Constitution Avenue and 7th Street, NW
For more information, visit www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org

4/03 Taking Poetry to the Streets

11 am - 4 pm
G Street between 9th and 10th Streets, NW
For more information call the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library at (202) 727-1101

4/16 DC Emancipation Day Parade and Celebration

10 am - 9:30 pm
Parade begins at Constitution Avenue and 7th Streets, NW
For more information, call (202) 727-6306

